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BEYOND THE SUNSET

BEYOND THE SUNSET

LATEST POEMS

BY

JULIA C. R. DORR

"My purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset and the baths
Of all the Western stars until I die."

—*Tennyson's Ulysses.*



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INVOCATION

Sing thou my songs for me when I am dead!

Soul of my soul, some day thou wilt awake

To see the morning on the hilltops break,

And the far summits flame with rosy red.

But I shall wake not, though above my head

Armies should thunder: nor for Love's sweet sake,

Though he the tenderest pilgrimage should make

Where I am lying in my grassy bed.

I shall be silent, with my song half sung:

I shall be dumb, with half the story told:

I shall be mute leaving the best unsaid.

Take thou the harp ere yet it be unstrung—

Wake thou the lyre ere yet its chords be cold—

Sing thou my songs—and thine—when I am dead!

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INVOCATION	V
PRELUDE	3
THE POET'S DOWER	5
A MEMORY	6
"A DEAD DOUGLAS"	7
GOD'S HOUR	8
THE ORATORY	9
IN THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD	10
THE DAYS THAT NEVER WERE	11
R. E. R.	12
CRUMBS	13
AN ACCOLADE	14
TO A LATE-COMER	15
WHEN DREAMS DEPART	16

	PAGE
REVELATION	17
HOMESICK	18
THE GUESTS AT THE INN	21
UNRETURNING	25
WHEN I SLEEP	28
THE JOY	30
IN ARCADY	32
TO A DANDELION	34
TWO LOVES	36
A FAR CRY	38
GETHSEMANE	43
THE CARVEN CHEST	45
AN APPEAL	49
A CLASS POEM	52
AN ANSWER TO A VALENTINE	55
THE VOICE OF THE TOWER	56
A NIGHT REVERIE	60
"O GLAD YOUNG YEAR!"	64

CONTENTS

ix

	PAGE
"ONLY"	66
AWAKE	67
TWO LYRICS	69
THY WILL	72
TO ONE WHO WENT TO CARCASSONNE	75
MOON PICTURES	78
HEART'S DESIRE	80
THE WINDS OF GOD	82
SPIRIT TO SPIRIT	84
ALL LOVES IN ONE	87
WITH A WEDDING GIFT	90
ALPHA AND OMEGA	92
"BEYOND"	94

BEYOND THE SUNSET

BEYOND THE SUNSET

PRELUDE

WHEN you can tell how the young grasses run
With swift glad feet across the meadows dun;
Or how the spring-time verdure softly creeps,
A dream of silence, up the mountain steeps;

When you can tell whence cometh form or hue,
Or why the rose is red, the violet blue;
Or how the lily from its murky bed
White and unsullied lifts its queenly head;

When you can name the serried ranks of stars
That blaze beyond the midnight's ebon bars;
Or count the waves that beat upon the shore
Of isles where Ocean thunders evermore;

When you can tell what life is, and declare,
Beyond a peradventure, whence the rare
Essence of Being comes, or where it goes
When the breath falters and the eyelids close;

Then you can analyze the poet's dream,
Its wild sweet rapture, its elusive gleam—
And tell us why the song he sings to-day
Is not the same that he sang yesterday!

THE POET'S DOWER

THE whole wide earth, O poet, is thy dower!

Claim thou its affluence as by right divine.

For thee suns rise and set, and clear stars shine,
Old ocean rolls, and far heights heavenward tower.

The thrush and nightingale, and every flower

Of every clime and every age are thine ;

All gods shall fill thy golden cup with wine,
All prophets pledge thee in the uplifted hour.

Thine are the mysteries of life and death ;

All loves, all joys, all passion, and all pain,

Temptations shared not, sins thou hast not known,
False hopes, frail raptures trembling at a breath,

The hero's ecstasy, the martyr's gain,

The high prayer soaring to the Great White Throne!

A MEMORY

A GRAY sarcophagus beside a wall
Crumbling and ivy-grown and gray with age,
O'er which a yew-tree, on whose wrinkled page
Was writ the lesson that Time writes for all,
Whispered of years remote and past recall;
Whispered of man's resistless heritage—
Death and decay, Oblivion's stern gauge,
And the long silences that round him fall.
But lo! Kind earth and gentle winds had filled
The empty shrine with largess! Tall grass grew
And gay flowers bloomed, where once the dead had
lain;
Love built its nest there, and its rapture trilled;
A white lamb cropped the young leaves wet with dew,
And Life still lived where Life had once been slain!

"A DEAD DOUGLAS"

SEPTEMBER, 1901

WHEN the great Chieftain falls the clans must weep!

To-day their banners flame on all the hills,

And, far or near, their solemn glory fills

Valley and glen the while he lies asleep.

The pibroch does not waken him; the deep,

Wild slogan now his heart no longer thrills,

Nor the loud summons when a Nation wills

Its chosen Lord with it the tryst shall keep!

Yea, clansmen, bear him to his sacred rest

With muffled drums and trumpets breathing low ;

There is no stain upon his spotless shield

Nor on his hands close folded on his breast.

Yet take ye courage, for full well ye know

How "A Dead Douglas surely wins the field!"

GOD'S HOUR

O RESTLESS soul, canst thou not wait God's hour?

"Let there be light" He said, and lo! the day

Gilded the mountain-tops, and far away

The dimpled valleys thrilled beneath its power,

Claiming the glorious sunlight as their dower.

'A myth, a fable that the wise gainsay?

An idle tale for children at their play?'

Yet fable is fair truth's consummate flower!

Earth waited long till Day unheralded,

Unsung, unprophesied, in splendor swept

A radiant presence through the Orient gates.

Not unto us shall the last word be said.

Yet one sure secret have the ages kept—

Light breaks at last on each high soul that waits!

THE ORATORY

IN the high-vaulted temple of my heart

There is an oratory thine alone—

A sweet, hushed, sacred chantry all thine own.

There do I fly when I would be apart

To dream dear dreams, for there I know thou art,

Albeit I see thee not. There is thy throne ;

There thou art crowned, and as at altar-stone

Fain would I kneel and let the day depart!

While this remains I cannot lose thee, dear,

Though countless centuries between us roll,

Though earth dissolves, and planets disappear,

And all the splendor of the starry scroll

Dies out of heaven, what room is there for fear?

Love still shall answer love, soul call to soul!

IN THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

MAITLAND, FLORIDA

O THOU most dear, thy presence fills the place!
Without, soft airs go wandering to and fro ;
By the long path thy purple pansies glow ;
While here within this silent, vaulted space
Hearts faint with longing to behold thy face!
Through the dim aisle the solemn chantings flow,
And holy words are said, and prayers breathed low;
How could thy voice pass, leaving here no trace?
Yet still we see thee, hear thee, feel thee near.
Somewhere thou *art*: and be thou near or far—
Close as this rose, remote as yonder star—
Not all the glories of the realms unknown,
Nor time, nor space, can keep thee from thine own.
Thy presence fills the place, O thou most dear!

THE DAYS THAT NEVER WERE

"O death in life, the days that are no more!"

O DAYS that are no more! the lords of song
Have sung your dirges, tolled your passing-bells,
In tones more sad, more sweet, than funeral knells
Through dim cathedral arches borne along.
Back from the past they call ye, mighty throng!
They wreathe your brows with golden asphodels,
They weave for you all wonder-working spells,
Sounding your praise in chorus full and strong.
But who shall sing the song, O yearning heart!
Of days that might have been, but never were,
Dying unshriven in the womb of Time,
Bearing in all this breathing world no part?
Ah, bring for them the frankincense and myrrh,
The vision splendid, and the gift sublime!

R. E. R.

No shadow darkens the resplendent day !

O mother Nature, dost thou make no moan

When he, thy son and lover, lieth prone,

Breathless, and silent? All thy hills are gay

In pomp of gold and crimson, like the play

Of royal banners shining in the sun,

Proudly rejoicing as for victories won!

Hath thy great heart no need to weep or pray?

And Nature answered : "Nay, I but rejoice !

I bid my vales be glad, and all my streams ;

I bid my mountains crown themselves with light,

And every late bird lift a joyful voice ;

For lo ! at length the radiant morning gleams,

And he who once was blind hath done with night."

CRUMBS

A PARABLE

ONLY the crumbs, Lord,—but she finds them sweet !

Ah, not for her was the fair table spread

With viands rare, rich fruits, and wheaten bread !

But when scant crumbs fall at the children's feet,

May she not stoop to gather them and eat ?

She craves no wine, nor roses white and red,

Round her lone board their fragrant breath to shed ;

Only for crumbs, dear Lord, doth she entreat !

For even crumbs may save a soul alive

And keep a heart from starving. Thou dost know,

Surely Thou knowest, Thou who didst create.

Never on heavenly manna may she thrive

Gathered each morning while the dawn-winds blow—

Give her but crumbs in lieu of Love's estate !

AN ACCOLADE

O KNIGHTLY heart, God gives to thee a sign !
For thee the shrine was builded long ago,
But long stood darkling, waiting for the glow,
The warmth, the glory, and the breath divine.
Lo! now to-day the altar-candles shine
With sudden, starry splendor. To and fro
The fragrant censers swing, and bending low
Angelic spirits pour thee heavenly wine !
Drink it, great heart, nor fear to drain the cup.
Thou hast kept holy vigil and art pure ;
Thou hast kept knightly vigil and art strong ;
Then proudly lift the royal banner up
By right divine, unchallengèd and sure—
And God be with thee if the way be long !

TO A LATE-COMER

(W. P. S.)

WHY didst thou come into my life so late?

If it were morning I could welcome thee

With glad all-hails, and bid each hour to be

The willing servitor of thine estate,

Lading thy brave ships with Time's richest freight.

If it were noonday I might hope to see

On some far height thy banners floating free,

And hear the acclaiming voices call thee great!

But it is nightfall and the stars are out;

Far in the west the crescent moon hangs low,

And near at hand the lurking shadows wait;

Darkness and silence gather round about,

Lethe's black stream is near its overflow,—

Ah, friend, dear friend, why didst thou come so late?

WHEN DREAMS DEPART

WHEN dreams depart, then it is time to die.

Nay, thou art dead when thy dear dreams depart,
Even though thy ghost still haunts the crowded mart,
Still with proud grace salutes the passer-by,
Reaps golden grain when the hot sun rides high,
Sails the far seas with compass and with chart,
Of the world's burdens bears its wonted part,
Or faces doom with calm, undaunted eye.
For dreams—they are the very breath of life ;
The “little leaven” that informs the whole ;
Wine of the gods, poured from the upper skies ;
Manna from heaven, to nerve thee for the strife.
Fetter thy dreams and hold them fast, O soul !
When they depart, it is thyself that dies.

REVELATION

I BUILT an altar to an unknown God
Whom ignorantly I worshipped. To its shrine
I brought rich gifts, oblations rare and fine;
And in each pleasaunce where my young feet trod
I sought the fairest flowers that decked the sod,
Roses and lilies, sprays of eglantine,
Myrtle and amaranth and lush woodbine
To wreathe the altar of that unknown God
Before whose shrine my heart knelt justified.
Yet oft I feared! One night when winds were
mute
And pale stars trembled in the heavens above,
"Tell me thy name, thy blessèd name!" I cried.
Low came a whisper, soft as silver flute,—
"Fear not, O child! my only name is Love!"

HOMESICK

O MY garden! lying whitely in the moonlight and the
dew,
Far across the leagues of distance flies my heart to-night
to you,
And I see your stately lilies in the tender radiance
gleam,
With a dim, mysterious splendor, like the angels of a
dream!

I can see the stealthy shadows creep along the ivied
wall,
And the bosky depths of verdure where the drooping
vine-leaves fall,
And the tall trees standing darkly with their crowns
against the sky,
While overhead the harvest moon goes slowly sailing by.

I can see the trellised arbor, and the roses' crimson glow,
And the lances of the larkspurs all glittering, row on row,
And the wilderness of hollyhocks, where brown bees seek
 their spoil,
And butterflies dance all day long, in glad and gay tur-
 moil.

O, the broad paths running straightly, north and south
 and east and west!

O, the wild grape climbing sturdily to reach the oriole's
 nest!

O, the bank where wild flowers blossom, ferns nod, and
 mosses creep

In a tangled maze of beauty over all the wooded steep!

Just beyond the moonlit garden I can see the orchard
 trees,

With their dark boughs overladen, stirring softly in the
 breeze,

And the shadows on the greensward, and within the
 pasture bars

The white sheep huddling quietly beneath the pallid stars.

O my garden! lying whitely in the moonlight and the dew,
Far across the restless ocean flies my yearning heart to
you,

And I turn from storied castle, hoary fane, and ruined
shrine,

To the dear, familiar pleasaunce where my own white
lilies shine—

With a vague, half-startled wonder if some night in
Paradise,

From the battlements of heaven I shall turn my longing
eyes

All the dim, resplendent spaces and the mazy star-drifts
through,

To my garden, lying whitely in the moonlight and the dew!

THE GUESTS AT THE INN

THE Princess came to Bethlehem's Inn :

The Keeper he bowed low ;
He sent his servants here and yon,
His maids ran to and fro.

They spread soft carpets for her feet,
Her bed with linen fine ;
They heaped her board with savory meats,
They brought rich fruits and wine.

The Chieftain came to Bethlehem's Inn,
With clash and clang of steel;
Into the wide court swift strode he,
And turned on armèd heel.

“Room for your lord!” he cried aloud.

“He brooks no long delay!”

The Keeper and his servitors

Did his behests straightway.

The Merchant came to Bethlehem’s Inn,

Across the desert far,

From Ispahan, and Samarcand,

And hoary Kandahar.

Rich Orient freight his camels bore :

The gates flew open wide

As in he swept, with stately mien,

His long, slow train beside.

The Pilgrim came to Bethlehem’s Inn :

Wayworn and old was he,

With beard unshorn and garments torn,

A piteous sight to see!

He found a corner dim and lone ;

He ate his scanty fare ;

Then laid his scrip and sandals by,

And said his evening prayer.

The Beggar came to Bethlehem's Inn :

They turned him not away ;

Though men and maidens scoffed at him,

They bade the varlet stay.

"The dogs have room : then why not he?"

One to another said ;

"Even dogs have earth to lie upon,

And plenteous broken bread!"

Maid Mary fared to Bethlehem's Inn :

Dark was the night and cold,

And eerily the icy blast

Swept down across the wold.

She drew her dark brown mantle close,

Her wimple round her head;

"Oh, hasten on, my lord," she cried,

"For I am sore bestead!"

Maid Mary came to Bethlehem's Inn:

There was no room for her ;

They brought her neither meat nor wine,

Nor fragrant oil, nor myrrh.

But where the hornèd oxen fed
Amid the sheaves of corn
One splendid star flamed out afar
When our Lord Christ was born!

UNRETURNING

Now twice ten times the stately, silent years
Have kept the midnight vigil, and passed on
To the dim bourn where all the ages sleep;
And twice ten times the watching stars have seen
The glad young year upspringing with the dawn,
Since thou didst cross this threshold to return
No more, no more! The house that thou didst build
Still bears thy impress as in days of old.
It hath a thousand tongues, and every one
Is eloquent of thee. When spring returns,
Each flower that blooms within the garden bounds
Misses thy presence, and the broad straight paths
Wait for the footsteps that they knew so well.
The roses are less fair than when thy hand
Trained them to beauty and to loveliness,
Yet for thy sake they lift their glowing cups,
Knowing thy wish and will. The winds that sigh

Through the tall sheltering pines, and bend the ferns
That cluster at their feet, still chant of thee
In low, melodious cadence. And at night,
When earth is hushed, and dewy calm lies deep
On field and woodland, then the holy stars
Shine on thy grave as once they shone for thee—
Thou who wert wont to call them by their names,
Searching the violet depths with reverent eyes
And rapt, hushed vision, as the serried ranks
Of the great constellations, one by one,
Sought each its destined place, and planets burned,
And the whole grand processional advanced
In stately splendor up the darkening skies :
Belted Orion, with his glittering sword,
The fair, pale Pleiads and the Hyades,
Red Aldebaran, Sirius white and cold,
And, blazing in the zenith, fiery Mars!

Yea, thou didst love this dear, green earth of ours,
Its mountain peaks and its far-rolling seas,
Its summer opulence, its winter snows.
Where hath thy home been all these changeful years?

Is it so fair that it hath blotted out
All memory of this? Eye hath not seen,
Nor hath ear heard, nor heart of man conceived!—
So runs the story of that other world
Of which we dream so oft while knowing naught.
But thou—thou knowest all! The mysteries
That vex our questioning souls, vex thine no more,
Now thou hast eaten of the Tree of Life
That men call Death. Yet wheresoe'er thou art
In God's great universe, dost thou not turn
Sometimes from larger life and greater joys
To this small leaf-clad orb, remembering still
Its tender loves that held thy soul in thrall?

.
The earth is silent; silent are the stars,
The midnight heavens, and the wide fields of air;
No voice replies; no word or sign is given!
But, be it soon or late, the day will come
When I shall hear the summons to go hence—
Whither I know not. Oh, be near me then!
Keep tryst with me in that transcendent hour,
And I shall tremble not, nor be afraid!

WHEN I SLEEP

WHEN I sleep I do not know
Where my soul makes haste to go,
Through wide spaces faring forth,
To the South or to the North,
Faring East or faring West,
Or on what mysterious quest.

When I sleep my sealèd eyes
Ope to marvels of surprise !
Buried hopes come back to me,
Long-lost loves again I see,
Present, past, and future seem
But as one, the while I dream.

When I sleep I wake again,
Wake to love and joy and pain ;
Wake with quickened sense to share
Earth's beatitude of prayer ;
Wake to know that night is done
And a new, glad day begun !

THE JOY

THE joy is in the doing,
Not the deed that's done ;
The swift and glad pursuing,
Not the goal that's won.

The joy is in the seeing,
Not in what we see ;
The ecstasy of vision,
Far and clear and free !

The joy is in the singing,
Whether heard or no ;
The poet's wild, sweet rapture,
And song's divinest flow !

The joy is in the being—
Joy of life and breath;
Joy of a soul triumphant,
Conqueror of death!

Is there a flaw in the marble?
Sculptor, do your best;
The joy is in the endeavor.
Leave to God the rest!

IN ARCADY

You have been in Arcady?
Say you so? say you so?
Where its peaceful rivers flow
Do you know? do you know?
Tell me quickly, tell me true,
If the road is plain to you,
Which way runs the path that leads
To its fragrant, flowery meads?

Once I dwelt in Arcady—
But 'twas long, long ago!
Oft I heard its soft winds blow,
Sweet and low, sweet and low;
Once from morn till dewy night
Rose its white towers in my sight,
Like the castles wondrous fair
Fancy paints in upper air.

Yes, we went to Arcady,—
Oh, how long, long ago !
Youth and Love and I together
In the early summer weather,
When the skies were bright and blue,
And the earth was fresh with dew,—
Ah, full well the way we knew
Then, to happy Arcady !

Youth still dwells in Arcady,
As so long, long ago !
Love still hears its soft winds blow
Sweet and low, sweet and low !
I alone have lost the way ;
I alone no longer stray
Where its perfect roses gleam
Like the splendors of a dream ;
I shall see thee never more,
Arcady, dear Arcady !

TO A DANDELION

LITTLE golden Dandelion,
Shining in the sun,
All the birds are singing now,
Day is just begun.
Grasses spring to greet thee ;
Joy is everywhere,
Light and song and fragrance
Filling all the air !

Pallid, white-haired Dandelion,
Swaying in the sun,
Tall and slender, silver-crowned,
Day is well-nigh done !
Fair and frail, O phantom,
Thou art but a theme
For a minstrel's singing,
Or a poet's dream !

Lo! a breeze sweeps by thee!

Whither art thou flown?

All thy silver tresses

To the winds are blown!

Whither now hath vanished

All thy slender grace,

All the starlike beauty

Of thy perfect face?

Gone, all gone forever!

Nay—another spring

Glad earth shall be gay again

With thy blossoming.

Death is life,—and life is joy!

Sleep in peace awhile,

Till thou wakest, young and fair,

In the Day-God's smile!

TWO LOVES

ONE was a child's romance,
A girl's bewildering dream,
Woven of fire and dew
And moonlight's silver gleam ;
Of the fragrance of the rose,
The glory of the stars,
The flash of sparkling waters,
The sunset's golden bars !
A thing of smiles and blushes,
Quick thrills and throbbing heart,
A strange, mysterious glamour
That bade the tear-drops start.

One was a woman's love,
Woven of many strands,
Richer than braided gold,
Stronger than iron bands;

A love that holier grew

Through all the changeful years,
That clasped close hands with joy,
Yet wavered not for tears.

A love that loved through all things,

Through sorrow, pain, and death—
Through all the bliss and all the bane
To which life answereth!

A FAR CRY

'Tis a far cry to youth, O my soul,
 'Tis a far cry to youth!
Though the years have flown onward unheeding,
 Through gladness and travail and ruth,
'Tis a far cry to youth, O my soul,
 'Tis a far cry to youth!

Wert thou I, O thou fair child-maiden,
 Who, ages and ages ago,
Looked forth from the curve of yon mirror,
 Impatient life's meaning to know;
To taste the red wine of its vintage,
 Its splendor, its rapture, its glow?

Thou hadst eyes like the pale stars of morning,
Just tinged with the blue of the skies;
Thy hair had the darkness of midnight,
When the wraiths of the tempest arise,
And thy cheeks wore the flush of soft carmine
In the heart of the wild rose that lies.

So young thou wert, child—so unwary!—
Yet so eager to learn and to do,
That the days were too short for thy living,
As on in their courses they flew,
And thy light feet kept time to earth's music,
Whether treading on heart's-ease or rue!

O, the magical glamour of moonlight,
When love was a fairy dream;
When romance, with its tremulous splendor,
Gilded all life with its gleam;
When the heart knew one song and one story—
One lofty, bewildering theme!

When friendship was quick recognition
Springing to life in a day ;
When heroes wore crowns of laurels,
And poets wore wreaths of bay ;
When faith knew the joy of believing
In Omnipotent Good away !

Speak, child, for the years are many,
And the past lies dim between,
And I fain would read the riddle
Of what thine eyes have seen—
Thou mystic, silent wonder,
Thou ghost of the might have been !

Didst thou know when the morning-glory
First sheathed its silver horn ;
When the roses drooped in the noontide,
Of their early freshness shorn ;
And the wild birds ceased from singing
In the heart of the woods forlorn ?

Oh, speak! Didst thou know when the shadow
That woman dreads drew nigh;
When the young bloom slowly faded,
And the young light left thine eye,
And there fell a shower of snowflakes
Where the dark locks used to lie?

Ah, maiden! the white-haired woman
Is but thyself grown older;
She hath lost some dear illusions,
Yet remembereth all you told her,
And still your dreams and visions
In the might of their love enfold her.

For she knows what you but dreamed of;
She hath drained the beaker of life;
She hath trodden its red-hot ploughshares;
She hath faced its storm and strife;
She hath heard its divinest music,
And danced to its lute and fife!

O child, it is long since we parted !
But surely in some far clime
We shall meet with tears and laughter
Beyond the river of Time,
And each in the clasp of the other
Pass on to the Hills Sublime !

GETHSEMANE

DARKNESS and silence and the breath of peace !
Then, lo ! a faint flush on the mountain peaks
That broadens, deepens, till the full-orbed moon
Soars in majestic splendor up the sky,
Blotting the stars out !

Be thou still, my soul !

We who revere the mighty men of old—
Sages and seers, and lords of high degree
Who woke the harp and lyre, martyrs who died
Defenders of the faith, and they who gave
Their life-blood gladly on the battle-field ;
Kings who ruled grandly for their people's weal,
Wearing high crowns by right unchallengèd—
We roam o'er land and sea to tread the paths
Their feet have hallowed, and to kiss the sod
That was their birthright. What their hands have
touched

We fain would touch ; and what their eyes have seen
We joy to look upon.

Yet every man

Of woman born since first the world was made,
O fair white moon, hath gazed upon thy face,
Awed by the splendor of thy loveliness !
Poet or painter, priest or king or clown,
Noble or beggar, lover, peasant, slave,—
All have rejoiced beholding thee so fair,
Thou peerless wonder of the adoring skies !
Yea, every eye hath seen thee, even His
Who knelt in lone Gethsemane what time
His own forsook Him. Be thou still, my soul—
What the Lord Christ beheld thou seest this night !

THE CARVEN CHEST

"My little son, my little son,"
Thus Mary spake to him,
What time he played with childish toys
Within the chamber dim.

"The day is done, my little son,
Night draweth near," she said ;
"Come to thy mother, little one,
And rest thy weary head."

The young child came with willing feet,
And looked into her face ;
Then nestled in her tender arms,
Held in a close embrace.

Lightly his fingers touched her brow ;
Sighed he : " Why art thou sad ?
There is no laughter in thine eyes ;
O mother dear, be glad ! "

Then playfully and tenderly
She clasped him to her breast ;
" Nay ! but I smile, I laugh," she said.
" Now close thine eyes and rest."

But round the dim and shadowy room
The wide eyes wandered far.
" What is this story that they tell
Of shepherds and a star—

" That led three wise men from the East
Across the desert wold,
Bearing unto a new-born child
Rich gifts and shining gold ?

" O mother dear, O mother dear,
Tell me the baby's name,
And why the angels sang of him,
And why the wise men came ! "

Ah, then did Mary's heart beat fast ;

Her lips crushed back a moan ;

"Ask me not this, my little son,

Till thou art older grown.

"What thou knowest not, in God's own time

He will make known to thee ;

Sleep now, dear heart, and take thy rest

Ere yet the dark hours be."

But still the tireless lips went on:

"I dreamed a dream last night—

A wondrous dream of one who came

Clad in a robe of light.

"He led me to a carven chest,

He turned a golden key ;

But even as he raised the lid

A cloud encompassed me,

"And from the air, like music rare,

A voice fell low and deep ;

"The hour hath not yet come," it said,

'Let the child longer sleep.'"

The mother pondered silently,
Her only answer this:
To fold the drooping eyelids down
And seal them with a kiss.

AN APPEAL

W. R. D.—H. R. D.

HAS the old pain been stilled?
Are the old woes forgot?
Art thou dwelling now, love,
Where grief and care are not?

In that land are there any
To call thee by thy name?
To bless thee or caress thee?
To praise thee or to blame?

In the house of many mansions
Is there one all thine own,
Where, O dear home lover,
Thou dost set thy throne?

Tell me, O well-belovèd!

O tell me, dost thou know
How still through cloud and sunshine
The earth days come and go?

I pray thee understand us!

Life claims us for its own;
Woven of light and darkness
Its web is round us thrown.

We sleep, we dream, we waken;

We go our busy ways;
We work, we play, we loiter,
As in the olden days;

We are glad in Nature's gladness;

In color, light, and song;
In the glory of the harvest
When summer days are long;

In the uplift of the mountains;

The splendor of the seas;
The flush of dawn and sunset;
The freshness of the breeze;

In the joys that still are left us;
 In the loves that still are ours;
In the hope that follows failure;
 In the calm of twilight hours.

Yet think not we forget thee
 Whether we dream or pray!
Art thou not glad, belovèd,
 That we do not weep alway?

A CLASS POEM

FAIR girls, with your sunlit faces
 Turned to the morning skies,
With your lips attuned to laughter,
 And the young light in your eyes,
What message shall I bring you
 From the far Mount of Years?
Shall it be song or sermon?
 A thing of smiles or tears?

You know not yet what life is;
 Its heart's-ease and its rue,
Its bitter-sweet and golden-rod
 Have blossomed not for you.
You have but plucked the wild rose
 Blooming beside the way,
And heard the thrushes' love song
 Borne on the winds of May.

Ah, well I know the wonder
And the glory of it all,
And how your hearts are bounding
As at the trumpet's call!
I know your dreams and visions
Of the life that is to be—
The glamour of moon and starlight,
The magic of cloud and sea!

To dream is sweet. But sweeter,
Dear hearts, the awakening is;
I, who have dreamed and wakened,
I joy to tell you this.
Illusion's frail white blossom
May fade as climbs the sun,
But the same sun ripens fruitage
Fairer to look upon.

For—Doing is better than Dreaming;
August is richer than June;
And the harvester's chant of labor
Is set to a nobler tune.

Yet—Being is better than Doing!
Hark! How the music swells
As the pageant of life sweeps onward
To the pealing of mighty bells!

And when Endeavor is over,
As it must be, soon or late,
It is good to sit in the twilight
With folded hands and wait.
It is good to know that the sowing
And the reaping all are done,
And to learn that the star of evening
Shines clear as the rising sun!

DANA HALL, WELLESLEY, MASS., 1905.

AN ANSWER TO A VALENTINE

My true love sent me a valentine
All on a winter's day,
And suddenly the cold gray skies
Grew soft and warm as May!
The snowflakes changed to apple blooms,
A pink-white fluttering crowd,
And on the swaying maple boughs
The robins sang aloud.

For moaning wintry winds, I heard
The music sweet and low
Of morning-glory trumpets
Through which the soft airs blow.
O love of mine, my Valentine!
This is no winter day—
For Love rules all the calendars,
And Love knows only May!

THE VOICE OF THE TOWER

ETHAN ALLEN

BURLINGTON, VT., 1905

YE have builded me well, ye have builded me strong,
And the years of my life shall be many and long !
O men of To-day, who have given me birth,
My voice shall be heard through the confines of earth,
Now deep as a mighty bell pealing afar,—
Now clear and triumphant as bugle notes are,—
Now strong as the wind's cry when tempests are out
And the soul of the Storm-God responds with a shout,—
Now soft as the murmur of slow-gliding streams,
Or as Love's tender whispers when heard in your
dreams !

The mountains shall hear it, and echo the strain
As they lift their proud heads over valley and plain,
And the broad lake, unresting, on waves rolling free
Shall carry my message to river and sea.

All its islands shall listen, as tranquil they lie
Looking up day and night to the fathomless sky;
All the forests that stretch to the north and the west
Are akin to my soul, I will answer their quest;—
And one day—who knoweth?—through cloudrifts and
bars

Some strong breath of mine may float up to the stars!

O men of To-day, who have set me on high,
Beneath me the great rock, above me the sky,
Ye have builded me well; ye have fashioned my form
In the strength that does battle with tumult and storm!
I am one with the ages. Their secrets are mine
Since you poured on my forehead the chrism divine
And bade me outlive ye. For ah, ye must pass
As the mist on the mountain, the dew on the grass,
While I—I shall live while the centuries sweep
In processional glory from deep unto deep!

Your children, and their children's children shall hear
The voice of the Tower ring loudly and clear!
It shall tell them of him in whose honor to-day

Drums beat, trumpets blare, and the wild bugles play.
Bid him come from Valhalla with eyes bright and bold
This fair stretch of earth once again to behold,
Bringing with him his comrades, the valiant and brave,
Who lived not for fame but their country to save.

—Ah, they come! They are here! They encompass
me round,

Though ye see not, and feel not, and hear not a
sound!

Beat louder, O drums! and, ye trumpets, lift high
Your jubilant notes till they fill the wide sky!
Shout, freemen! who hold the broad land of their love,
The land they esteemed all things earthly above!
They have come at your call from the realm where they
dwell,

With the infinite hosts who have borne their parts well,
And the great of all climes and all ages are fain
To join the loud pæans and swell the refrain.
Pledge them honor and fealty! Tell them to-day
That they live in your hearts and shall live there
always!

I shall stand on my rock as the years come and go,
And whether the ages pass swiftly or slow,
They shall hear the proud story of chivalrous youth,
Of honor unsullied, of courage and truth,
Of patriot ardor, of valor sublime
That soars like a bird o'er the wreckage of time ;—
Of all souls that undaunted face danger and death,
Counting all that life holds as the gossamer's breath
Save the love of the highest, the love that looks up
In the face of the Highest—and draineth the cup !

A NIGHT REVERIE

Now day is done, and heart and hand may rest!
The calm of night is on the dreaming earth;
The soft winds sleep, and faintly from afar
The night-bird's lone and melancholy cry
Makes the wide silence deeper. Stealthily
The noiseless shadows creep from tree to tree;
All silently the darkling river flows;
All quietly the watching stars look down
On hills and valleys wrapped in deep repose.

O hush, hush, hush! It is the time for prayer—
The time for visions—and the hour for dreams!
Breathe thou no whisper. Let no voice profane
The holy silences of earth and heaven.

Darker and darker still! The mighty dome
Of yon great maple lifts itself on high
In worship of the Infinite. Then a glow

Fainter than that of dawning steals athwart
The lower heavens, and earth, breathless, waits
Moment by moment, till the mountain peaks
Startled from slumber put their glory on—
And lo! the harvest moon!

Thou glorious One!

Shall frail man call thee *dead*, thou who hast seen
Eons and cycles pass, and centuries
Seek one by one the bourn whence none returns,
And generation after generation fall
As falls the grass before the mower's scythe,
To die and be forgotten? And yet thou,
Fair Queen of Heaven and Ruler of the seas,
Thou art to-night resplendent and unworn
As when the first man saw thee part the clouds,
And all the stars and planets hid abashed
Before thy majesty!

Ah, couldst thou speak,
Couldst thou but tell us what thine eyes have seen,
How would all human annals pale, and fade
To utter nothingness! For thou, O Moon,
Thou hast seen all things! From creation's dawn,

Through night to day, through chaos to the reign
Of peace and order and the sure return
Of season after season, till at length
Earth stood forth radiant in the smile of God,
Thou hast beheld the whole, and watched the growth
Of man from the beginning. Thou hast seen
The cave-men and the dwellers in the rocks;
And them that dwelt in tents and roamed the plains;
And them that built great cities, proudly fair
With domes and temples, and the stately shrines
Wherein strange gods sat throned in majesty.
And thou hast seen them crumble, stone by stone,
And desert sands drift o'er them till the wolf,
The jackal, and the tiger, reared their young
In the vast solitudes. Thou didst look on
While Rhamses and Sesostris builded high
The mighty pyramids that mock at death,
And when great Thothmes bade the Sphinx keep guard
Forever at the Gate of Mysteries.
Thou hast seen empires rise and empires fall.
And states and kingdoms blossom and decay;
Battle and tumult, and the flaming sword

Blazing before lost Edens—and each night
In every age and every clime new graves!
Earth wearies of them—of her graves that lie
On every hilltop, and in every vale—
For everywhere man dies!

But all unchanged
Thou dost behold the tireless years sweep on,
Seedtime and harvest bringing and the sure
Return of autumn with its golden spoil,
The richest freight in God's great argosies.

.
Silent art thou, O Moon! and on thy face
Dwells immemorial calm, the calm of one
Who sees the end from the beginning. Thou—
Thou, and Orion, and Alcyone,
And all the stars that gem the midnight heavens—
Ye know that all is well, that Law is Love,
And life and death alike do the Lawgiver's will.

“O GLAD YOUNG YEAR!”

THEY feet are light upon the morning hills,
O glad young year!
What dost thou bring to man, or bliss, or ban,
Or joy, or hope, or fear,
O glad young year?

A gay voice floated from the untroubled sky
Like a child's laugh,—“Mortal, I know not, I!”

Thy face is hidden, though thy steps are light,
O blithe young year!
Lift thou the veil! Art thou not passing fair,
As fair as thou art dear—
O blithe young year?

A voice replied from out the unfathomed sky—
“I show my face to no man, no, not I!”

In a twelve-month thou wilt be old and wan,
Thou short-lived year!

Thou wilt have gone where centuries lie dead.

Ere then, what cheer? What cheer?

Speak thou, O year!

A deep voice echoed from the far-off sky—

"Ask me not thou! Mortal, God knows—not I!"

“ONLY”

ONLY a footstep at the door;
A shadow on the wall;
Fine courtesies; some tender words—
And that was all!

Only a dream that ne'er came true;
Yet held the heart in thrall;
A memory that would not die—
And that was all!

Only a wistful face whereon
Time's deepening shadows fall;
A heart-cry for what never was—
And that is all!

AWAKE

AWAKE, awake, belovèd!

The Christmas morn is here;
O'er valley, plain, and mountain-top,
The Day-star shineth clear.

O hark, O hark, belovèd!

Hear ye earth's glad acclaim;
To-day in every land and clime
Men breathe the Christ-Child's name.

We need no choiring angels,
Nor myth, nor legend dear;
We know Jehovah liveth,
We know the Christ is here.

Lo! at the door He knocketh—
He waits our love to win;
Awake, awake, belovèd,
Rise up, and let Him in!

TWO LYRICS

ADAPTED FROM THE ITALIAN OF VITTORIA MARINI

I.—A MYSTERY

O STRANGE, mysterious guest,
 Whence dost thou come to me?
From what far realm where silver stars
Shine soft beyond the sunset bars?
 Across what crystal sea?

Thou art no laughing Love,
 Rose-crowned and garlanded,
With young Dreams floating at thy side,
While Joy swings all her portals wide,
 And Fear and Doubt have fled.

Thy face is turned away,
I cannot see thine eyes;
I know not if they look on me
Or kindly, or reproachfully,
Or wide with slow surprise.

Why hast thou sought my door,
O thou unbidden guest?
To bid thee go I do not dare,
Nor to come in my cup to share,—
Tell me thy name and quest!

II.—A MYSTERY SOLVED

Come in, thou heavenly guest,—
Lo! I fling wide the door!
At last, at last, I see thy face
All radiant with celestial grace;
Come, to go forth no more!

Come in, thou strange, sweet guest!
Proudly I bid thee stay;
I know thee now for what thou art,

The one sole warder of my heart,—
Keep thou the key alway!

Come in, imperious guest!
To thy behest I yield;
I give my soul, my heart, my hand,
Surrendering all to thy command,—
Be thou my crown and shield!

Come in, thou kingly guest!
Low in the dust I bow;
I kneel to bathe thy royal feet,
Bringing rich balms and odors sweet,—
Lord of my life art thou!

THY WILL

WHEN the radiant morning skies
Met my half-awakened eyes;
When I looked abroad to see
Early dew on flower and tree;
When the matin-birds were singing,
And the hills with joy were ringing,
It was easy then to say,
"Lord, thy will be done alway!"

*"If Joy be thy minister,
I will clasp glad hands with her:
If Thou sendest pallid pain,
My strong soul shall not complain:
I will quiet be, nor fret
Though my path with thorns be set:
Patient thread each tangled maze,
Going softly all my days."*

Youth is confident and wise
 In its own unerring eyes,
 Solving with unbated breath
 Mysteries of life and death;
 Challenging both time and fate;
 Sure to conquer soon or late;
 Discounting all grief and loss,
 Sharpest pang, or heaviest cross.

What knew I of pain or woe
 When life wore its early glow,
 And in measureless content
 Down its sunlit ways I went?
 What of grief when I could borrow
 From all winds surcease of sorrow?
 Lord, thy will and mine were one
 When youth sang,—“*Thy will be done!*”

Yet,—O Father, Thou art just
 To thy children of the dust!
 If when hours of darkness come
 Strong hearts fail, and lips are dumb,

And our fainting spirits shrink
From some fateful river's brink,
Then teach thou our souls to say,—
“*Lord, Thy will be done this day!*”

TO ONE WHO WENT TO CARCASSONNE

I CAN scarce believe the tale
Borne to me on every gale!
You have been to Carcassonne?
Looked its stately towers upon?
Trode its streets where, blithe and gay,
Knights and dames in bright array
Loitered in the evening glow,
Doffed their hats, or curtsied low,
When "two Generals," proud as they,
Gave "the Bishop" right of way?

Ah, the Cité on its hill!
Did you climb with right good will
Up to heights where banners fly
Red and gold against the sky?
Did the lofty ramparts gleam

Like the pageants of a dream?
Battlements and bastions soar
Like great mountains high and hoar,
While from azure skies the sun
Shone on mighty Carcassonne?

Carcassonne is not a myth—
Just a name to conjure with?
Figment of a poet's brain,
Child of his own joy and pain?
Do men *live* in Carcassonne—
Love and labor, strive and die,
Pray vain prayers for bliss unwon,
Lift pale faces to the sky?
In its streets do children play,
Laughing, shouting, all the day?

You have been to Carcassonne.
Then for you the goal is won;
You have grasped the unattained;
What we long for, you have gained.
All men go to Arcady—

Dear, dream-haunted Arcady;
Soon or late, they breathe its air,
Learn its language, pray its prayer,
Linger there till dreams are done,—
Yet—few go to Carcassonne!

MOON-PICTURES

A SLENDER crescent in the opal west,
Low-hung above a mountain's darkening crest—
A silent dream above a world at rest.

.
The bending curve of the horizon bar—
A silver boat moored high in depths afar,
Cradling in tender arms one lone bright star!

.
An orchard close where wandering moonbeams strayed,
Weaving weird tapestries of light and shade,
And fairy paths for fairy footsteps made.

.
A great white harvest moon, divinely fair,
Slow sailing through resplendent seas of air,
Over dark pine-trees, and a garden rare.

.

A broad street flooded with the silver flow
Of the white moonbeams on new-fallen snow,
While, overhead, cloud shapes swept to and fro;

.

A curtained window and a casement low,
And a fair woman in the radiant glow
On whom the king smiled, passing, long ago!

.

HEART'S DESIRE

"God give you your heart's desire,
Whatever it be," she said;
Then down the gallery's shining length
Like a thing of light she sped.

Her face was a stranger's face;
Her name I shall never know;
But softly her benediction fell
As the night-winds breathing low.

Who knoweth the heart's desire?
Its innermost secret dream?
Its holiest shrine where the altar-lights
Forever and ever gleam?

Who guesseth the heart's desire?

Ah, neither you nor I!

It hideth away in darkling space

From the gaze of the passer-by.

Who giveth the heart's desire

To the child that cries for the moon?

Or the samite robe and the Holy Grail

To the soul that was born too soon?

Who giveth the heart's desire

To the lover whose love lies dead?

Or the priest who faces the silence

With the living word unsaid?

Who giveth the heart's desire

To the poet with harp unstrung,

When he turns from the trembling lyre

With his noblest song unsung?

THE WINDS OF GOD

*"Go thou to her, O Rose,
And bear this word from me,
Tell her,—'By every wind that blows
I send my love to thee.' "*

The mighty winds go by
On their unerring quest;
I hear their strong wings as they fly
From sea to mountain crest.

The jocund winds go by,
Like children mad with glee;
They toss the shrinking leaves on high;
They gayly mock at me!

The moaning winds go by
Sobbing from pole to pole;
Sleepless I hear their bitter cry—
Their wail of want and dole.

The winds of God go by
In fathomless unrest;
The north winds to the south reply,
The east winds to the west.

All winds of God go by!
It matters nought to me;—
They bring not from the earth or sky
One word of love from thee!

SPIRIT TO SPIRIT

EONS, or centuries, or years ago—

We two were man and woman, thou and I,
On yon dear earth now swinging far below
The star-mists floating by.

But now we are two spirits, in the wide
Mysterious realm whereof all mortals dream;
The unknown country where the dead abide
Beyond the sunset gleam.

And I—I cannot find thee anywhere!
I roam from star to star in search of thee;
I wander through the boundless fields of air,
And by the crystal sea.

I scan all faces and I question all;
I breathe thy name to every wind that blows;
Through the wide silences I call and call—
But still the silence grows.

Dost thou remember how, one midnight drear,
We sat before a fading fire alone,
Dreaming young dreams the while the wan old year
Reeled from his trembling throne?

And thou didst whisper, "Dear, from farthest skies,
From utmost space, my love shall summon thee,
Though the grave-mould lie darkly on thine eyes,
To keep this tryst with me!"

Was it last year? O Love, I do not know!
The high gods count not time. We are as they.
All silently the tides of being flow;
A year is as a day!

I only know I cannot find thee, dear!
This mighty universe is all too wide;
Where art thou? In what far-removèd sphere
Is thought of me denied?

New lives, new loves, new knowledge, and new laws!

I still remember. Does thy soul forget?

Heart unto heart if love no longer draws,

Then the last seal is set!

ALL LOVES IN ONE

ONLY in day-dreams do I dream of thee!
By day our Past moves ever by my side,
A mystic Presence of majestic mien,
In samite clad white as its stainless soul,—
And eyes like his who sought the Holy Grail.

By day, by day, O thou beloved and lost!
Under the hidden current of my life
The thought of thee runs ever, tingeing all
With its own color, even as the sky
Lends its own azure to the sleeping lake.

By day, by day, the soft airs breathe thy name;
The strong winds bear it on their mighty wings;
The whispering pines repeat it to their kin;
Each flower speaks of thee, and the red rose breaks
Its box of precious ointment at thy feet.

All times are thine. All seasons are thine own;
The joy of spring, fair summer's golden prime,
Autumn's rich splendor, and the winter snows;—
The flush of dawn, noontide, and lengthening shades,
Sunset and moonrise and the evening star.

All poets sing of thee. All tender lays
Of ancient minstrelsy seem born of thee;
Music high-soaring to the gates of Heaven,
The martial drum, the trumpet's long appeal,
The requiem low,—taps, and the last salute.

.

Only in day-dreams dream I now of thee!
Once when night came and my glad soul sprang free
From the close bonds of sense, I dreamed and dreamed!
I was a young child sitting at thy knee
And shyly groping for thy tender hand;

Thy mother, in all humble, household ways
Ministering to thee, bringing food and wine;
Thy comrade, reading from the self-same book

And conning life's hard lessons, one by one;
Thy friend, thy lover, giving kiss for kiss.

And sometimes through the world of dreams there swept,
Like the swift shadows over meadow grass,
Such strange, fantastic visions that I laughed
And wept—all in one breath! How will it be
When after life's long dream I sleep indeed?

WITH A WEDDING-GIFT

LONG years ago, the legends say—
It may have been in far Cathay,
In Kerdistan, or Samarkand,
Agra, Tabriz, or Saraband,
Where palm-trees wave, and golden showers
Fall from the sweet acacia bowers—
Heir to the worker's heritage,
From year to year, from youth to age,
In a low chamber's cloistered gloom
A weaver sat before his loom.

I know not if the tale be true;
As told to me, I tell to you.
Above his loom this pattern hung,
Designed by one who died unsung,
Unknown, unheralded, his fame

Not even the shadow of a name;
But day by day the weaver wrought
Embodying the creative thought,
Until his own dream grew more real
And perfect than the fair ideal.

So at our loom of life we weave
From sunlit morn to darkening eve.
We toss the shuttle to and fro,—
The varied colors come and go,—
A bright thread here, a shadow there,
Perchance strange tangles everywhere.
Yet fear not, faint not! He whose hand
Follows the Master's high command
Shall weave a web more perfect far
Than even the dreams of angels are!

ALPHA AND OMEGA

THE first and the last art thou—
The Morning and Evening Star;
The dawn and the sunset gleam
On the dim horizon bar;

The bud and the perfect flower;
The seed and the ripened grain;
Spring-time and harvest art thou—
The cloud and the latter rain!

Thou art the word of the Prophet,
And the Prophet's word fulfilled;
Thou art Miriam's song of triumph,
And the anthem not yet stilled.

Thou art the throne and the sceptre,
Thou art freedom's latest sign;
The cry of the martyred people,
And the grasp of the Hand Divine!

Thou art the prayer and its answer;
The dream and the heart's desire;
The spark in the smouldering embers,
The leap of the altar fire!

Oh! the eons may come and go,
And the stars burn out in the sky;—
Thou wilt still be the first and the last
While the endless years roll by!

“BEYOND”

BEYOND the sunset's crimson bars,
Beyond the twilight and the stars,
Beyond the midnight and the dark,
Sail on, sail on, O happy barque,
Into the dawn of that To-morrow
Where hearts shall find the end of sorrow
And Love shall find its own!



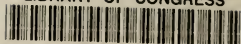
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